

As you know, the already tenuous situation in Gaza has deteriorated in recent weeks. On December 19, a six-month cease fire between Israel and the terrorist group Hamas expired. While Hamas never completely stopped its rocket attacks on Israel, the group ratcheted up its violent and indiscriminate attacks after the truce ended, firing over 100 rockets into Israel between December 24th and 25th. Israel responded with air, naval, and ground operations to defend its people and deal a serious blow to Hamas. As of this update, Israel's defensive operations continue.



Source: U.S. State Department

I believe Israel's response to the repeated attacks from Hamas militants is entirely justifiable and understandable. Israel cannot stand idle while their citizens are the target of constant terrorist activities. The United States did not stand still after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, and we would not ignore a barrage of terrorist rocket attacks threatening the American people. As with any conflict, military operations should target militants rather than civilians, and the loss of innocent life is tragic. But I believe every nation has the right and responsibility to take firm action to defend their people from deadly attacks.

For enduring peace in the Middle East to occur, Hamas must recognize Israel's fundamental

right to exist, permanently stop attacking the people of Israel, and join with moderate Palestinians in pursuing an agreement where Israel's lasting security is assured. I hope that Hamas will be willing to take these essential steps so the Israeli and Palestinian peoples can finally live side-by-side in peace.